



Gold Note HP-10 Deluxe

WINNER

PERSONAL AUDIO — ELECTRONICS



Despite electronics being only one of several areas that Gold Note focuses on, the multi-talented audio manufacturer makes some extremely sophisticated products. Case in point: the HP-10 Deluxe.

On the face of it, this is a fairly conventional headphone amplifier with balanced and unbalanced analogue inputs and outputs (albeit one that, in this premium 'Deluxe' form, also adds Bluetooth functionality and a USB-C input). But power this beautiful half-width beast up, and you will soon realise that a text display has been included for good reason.

A tweaker's dream

Indeed, the HP-10 Deluxe offers a complete suite of 'Studio' adjustments – crossfeed settings, Harman curve equalisation options, damping factor and (response linearising) 'Superflat' modes, and even the ability to assemble profiles for different headphones or genres. It's a tweaker's dream

(yes, a remote is thankfully included!) and proves valuable for Ed Selley, who is a big fan of the crossfeed function: "When Hope Sandoval begins her stunning vocal turn in *Into Dust*, she's in front of you and not simply singing into each ear."

Such praise applies broadly to the Gold Note's music-making, too. "The most immediately arresting aspect of what it does is the sheer amount of detail it effortlessly extracts from material," he notes as he plays Agnes Obel's 'Philharmonics'. "The HP-10 demonstrates excellent tonal realism coupled with enough dynamics to ensure that a real sense of the constrained force in her piano is conveyed in the recording. This is aided by excellent bass extension."

Any suspicions that Gold Note could be a jack of all trades and master of none are resolutely put to bed by the HP-10 Deluxe.

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